

For the General Reader and Musician alike

SOME

FAMOUS SYMPHONIES

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THEM

With their STORY & SIMPLE ANALYSIS

References also to Gramophone Records

By J. F. PORTE

With Portraits

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CÉSAR FRANCK'S SYMPHONY IN
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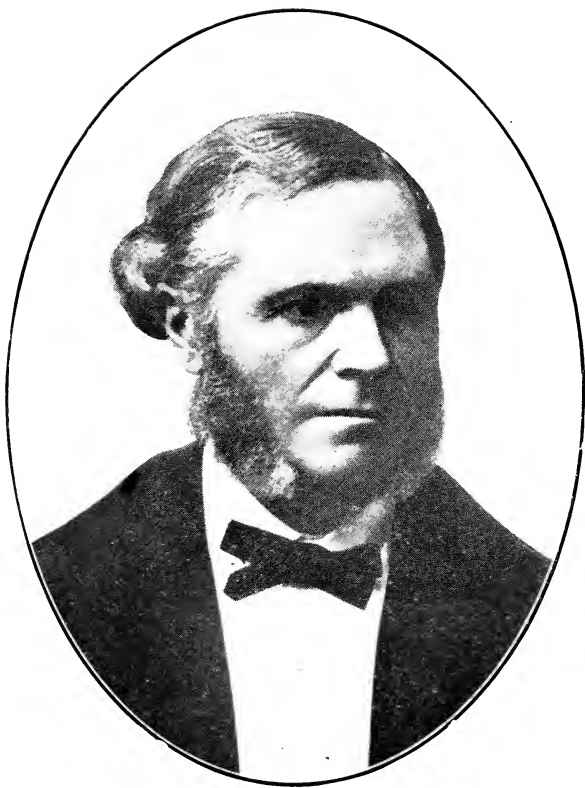
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César Franck

SYMPHONY in D Minor.

CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890).

FRANCK was born at Liege, Belgium, and studied at the conservatoire there. After teaching for two years in his native country, he settled in Paris at the age of twenty-two. He is generally regarded as a French composer, and his place in French music is now recognised as one of the greatest artistic influences of the nineteenth century. Duparc, D'Indy, the talented Chausson, Lekeu and Pierné were among his pupils, and Fauré, Guilmant, Chabrier and Dukas are numbered among his disciples. Franck worked from no high official position worthy of his regenerating work for French music; on the contrary he was misunderstood and slighted by his official contemporaries. Living quietly for his art, his warmth and sincerity soon attracted a group of the best young musicians of his day who loved and revered him. He was a fine organist,

and held a position in this capacity at the church of St. Clotilde, and was later professor of the organ at the Paris Conservatoire.

At the time of its composition (between 1880 and 1888), Franck's symphony presented the successful solving of the problem of enlarging and reviving the classical form without destroying it. In this accomplishment his influence is felt even as far as Elgar's Symphony in A flat, No. 1.

The symphony is dedicated "To my friend, Henri Duparc." Duparc was a pupil of Franck.

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1. Lento. Allegro non troppo.
 2. Allegretto.
 3. Allegro non troppo.

1. 'Cellos and basses open with a somewhat sombre, yet serene theme that is generic of this movement and is also recalled in the *finale*. It seems to express the simple life of Franck, subdued, yet deeply charged with the sublimity of the true artist. It is developed until it broadens into a passionate statement as the principal theme of the *allegro non troppo*. The *lento* version is repeated in serenely expressive tones, now in F minor, and the *allegro* subsequently follows in the same tonality. The strings now introduce a calmly flowing new subject in F major. A big

crescendo leads to a heroic and lofty theme justly described by M. Guy Ropartz as the "motive of faith."^{*} It expresses the very soul of Franck the true artist, and plays an important part in what Vincent D'Indy described as the symphony's "perpetual ascension towards pure bliss and life-giving light." A lengthy development follows until the *lento* reappears, where the sombre opening tune is now uttered in loud, stern tones. The *allegro* is resumed and later the "motive of faith" appears with calm assurance, but the close of the movement comes with a powerful insistence of the opening *lento*.

2. Much of this movement carries a wonderful mood of spiritual calm, which may be likened to the air of sweet sanctity in an old French church. Sixteen bars of *pizzicato* (plucked) chords for strings and harps serve as a preludial theme to the principal subject, a soothing and beautiful melody introduced by the cor anglais (alto oboe) and continued by clarinet, horn and flute. The theme of the preludial bars intervenes between this and a new one, smooth and song-like, for the violins. The preludial theme now ushers a new section, in triplet rhythm. Although the music is

* Occurring early in Part 2 (first movement—second section) of the "Columbia" gramophone records.

here somewhat more animated, the quiet peaceful mood is sustained. Soon a clarinet plays a serene melody above the triplet rhythm.* After a time the principal subject is heard amid the triplet rhythm, and later the prelude theme sheds its soft light across the whole. The movement ends peacefully. We leave it with regret, but happily both its principal and prelude themes are recalled in the next and last movement.

3. "What can be more joyous, more sanely vivacious, than the principal subject of the *finale*, around which all the other ideas in the work seem to gather and crystallise, while in the higher registers there rules that theme which M. Guy Ropartz has so truly called 'the motive of faith'?" asks D'Indy. The principal subject of the movement is announced by 'cellos and bassoons, accompanied by violins and violas. After this has been discussed, the brass announces the second subject, which is taken up by first violins and violas. A fresh motive, suggestive of quiet strength of purpose, appears softly in the lower strings. After a time the principal subject of the second movement (cor anglais solo) is heard; its prelude theme follows. The first and second subjects of

* Occurring in Part 5 (second movement—second section) of the "Columbia" gramophone records.

the *finale* are now developed, and eventually the principal theme of the second movement is heard in the glory of the full orchestra. The music later grows quiet and the "motive of faith" is heard. This is soon followed by the more sombre accents of the opening *lento* of the first movement. The "motive of faith" reasserts itself, however, and a vigorous return to the *finale's* principal subject makes the concluding pages of the symphony.

The work is available for the gramophone on "Columbia" records, played by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra under its famous conductor, Sir Henry J. Wood. Sir Henry, it may be noted, did much to make this once neglected symphony known in London, and his gramophone records of it are exceedingly interesting.

HAYDN'S SYMPHONY NO. 2, IN D,
"THE LONDON."

SYMPHONY No. 2, in D, "The London."

HAYDN (1732-1809).

HAYDN is known as the father of both the modern symphony and the modern orchestra. During his later years he was affectionately referred to as "Papa Haydn." The present book is not a place for fully expounding the exact historical importance of Haydn's symphonies. Suffice it to say that, while not actually inventing anything new in musical usage, he established the concerted use of sonata form, strengthened the homophonic and harmonic use of material for composition, and indicated the value of orchestral colour on a more equal footing with design as a means of expression and effect. His influence was immediately reinforced by that of Mozart and Beethoven, and thus the great musical art form of the symphony was properly established. Haydn composed one hundred and twenty-five symphonies, but not all are of equal

worth. His finest examples are those connected with England. In 1791 and 1794, Salomon, a violinist, but more ambitious as a concert promoter, succeeded in bringing Haydn to London. The famous composer, hitherto used to a comparatively quiet life, was received with remarkable enthusiasm. Overwhelmed with attentions, professional and social, "patronised" by royalty, he was generally lionised like a popular monarch. Oxford made him a Doctor of Music, and one of his symphonies is called "The Oxford." Spurred on by the worth of Mozart's works, and encouraged by his warm hearted reception in England, Haydn, although in his "sixties," now embarked on his finest creative period.

For his two visits to London, Haydn composed two sets of six symphonies. Concerning these, Salomon said to him: "Sir, I think you will never surpass these symphonies." "Sir," replied the composer, "I never mean to try." A contemporary newspaper commented on the new works as follows:

"It is truly wonderful what sublime and august thoughts this master weaves into his works. Passages often occur to which it is impossible to listen without becoming excited—we are carried away by admiration, and are forced to applaud with hand and mouth. The Frenchmen here cannot restrain their transports in soft adagios; they clap their hands in loud applause and thus mar the effect."

Some confusion of numbering surrounds Haydn's symphonies. The present one is generally known as No. 2, in D, "The London"; but it is also marked in Breitkopf and Härtel's edition as No. 104, and in Paxton's as No. 7, in D. "The London" is one of the finest of Haydn's symphonies. It anticipates Beethoven in a marked degree, and, quite apart from its own historical interest and that of the composer, is music that can be enjoyed to this day. Ever a sheer, straightforward delight to the ear, it is still, in the words of a French critic, "too dangerous a rival for modern composers." The outstanding feature is perhaps, in the light of later and more intricate works, the wonderful effects obtained by simple means. The slow movement has a sincerity of expression that is, at root, one of the fine things in music.

The symphony reflects much of the composer's Croatian origin, especially in the last movement, and we may consider that it is as meaningless to call Haydn an Austrian composer as to call Beethoven a German composer; both frequently expressed a musical idiom entirely natural to their origin, but outside the countries that claim them as Teutons (see remarks on the third movement of Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony). No marked problematic matter or emotional conflict

is found in this symphony, which should be listened to purely as music.

The orchestra is that of the "classical" period, but not quite so finely coloured as Mozart and Beethoven (the latter a pupil of Haydn) made it; nor is it extended anywhere to trombones, which were not then in general use. It is composed of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, drums and strings. Horns and trumpets, having no valves at the time, are restricted to open notes, as in Mozart and Beethoven.

There are four movements, but these are not linked up by any main theme such as unifies the whole in many symphonies by later composers.

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1. Adagio. Allegro.
 2. Andante.
 3. *Menuetto*—Allegro.
 4. Allegro spiritoso.

1. The slow introduction, with its contrasts of sudden loud accents, for full orchestra, and quiet repose, distinctly foreshadows the mightier moods of Beethoven. The *allegro* opens with a quiet, but cheery theme that is typical of its composer's sunny nature. Again the contrast of sudden *ff* for the full band; but there is now no anticipation

of Beethoven, and the music goes on in Haydn's own spirited style. The form is of course comparatively simple, and the listener should have no difficulty in following the movement to its end with wholehearted enjoyment. Note the use of the figure of four notes followed by two longer ones; it assumes much of that rhythmic significance later so favoured and developed by Beethoven. The wood-wind mostly doubles the strings, but there are occasional bits of individual treatment.

2. The melody given out by the strings is simple, yet sincere and beautiful in its expressiveness. The tonality changes to the minor; flute, oboes and bassoon being noticed to have four bars on their own for the occasion. The full orchestra suddenly bursts in, having the same effect, if not intention, of the slow movement of the "Surprise" Symphony, another of the Salomon series, in which a sudden *ff* served to wake up the aristocratic audiences who used this part of a work as an opportunity for an after-dinner doze. The present movement, like the first, can easily be traced to its end. Some charming varieties of the opening melody will be noted, including a four bar solo for flute, accompanied only by oboes and bassoons. A little later the flute also has a triplet passage mainly to itself. Apart from these ex-

ceptions, the wood-wind is not often trusted alone. Near the end, a simple yet lovely little touch for the two horns will be noted. This of course is quite easy for present day instruments, but the effect, nevertheless, is still charming, creating a lovely and peaceful atmosphere in which to close the movement.

3. The minuets and trios of Haydn's symphonies are almost unrivalled. There is a world of difference between the polished refinement of a Mozart example and the cheery spirit of one by Haydn, yet both show the master hand. Beethoven made the third movement a much more extended and significant affair, but, in his eighth symphony, suddenly returned to the Haydn style.

The *Menuetto* (little minuet) is announced by the full orchestra, and is one of the composer's best examples of the form. The trio portion is a running theme in the first violins, doubled first by the oboe and then by the bassoon, and accompanied *pizzicato* (plucked) by the other strings. Clarinets, brass and drums are silent. After the usual repeat, a connecting passage leads back to the *Menuetto* for the full orchestra.

4. The last movement opens softly with a drone bass in horns and 'cellos, over which the first violins play an apparently Croatian folk-tune. The other instruments are all silent, and



Haydn

the general effect has been likened to bagpipes. Other instruments soon join in, and suddenly the full orchestra bursts in with a vivacious continuance of the tune. The opening part returns, soon followed by another vivacious fragment. The second subject will be recognised by its more sustained character; it has a contrasting mood of quiet seriousness. The vivacious tune soon dispels it, and, with its kin, again makes the mood one of general high spirits. The return and development of the tranquil mood brings some quiet chords of almost Beethoven-like solemnity. The first subject reappears quietly, as if loath to disturb the serenity that has settled over the music. The vivacious part breaks in, however, and the movement proceeds gaily, although the tranquil mood is again noticed. One of the few passages for wood wind alone will be noticed where flute and oboes play with the first subject. The symphony ends with decisive chords.

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY'S
SYMPHONY NO. 3, IN A MINOR,
"THE SCOTCH" (OP. 56).

SYMPHONY No. 3, in A Minor,

"The Scotch" (Op. 56).

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY (1809-1847).

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY presents the case of a man starting as a genius, but, finding his social table well provided, settles down to be merely a comfortable man of talent. In proportion to the boyhood promise of his "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture, Mendelssohn-Bartholdy developed much less than might have been expected. He was the chief musical apostle of Victorian England, where he was naturally favoured by a court that was largely related to his own country. His association with England fortunately led him to discover a source of inspiration that whipped up his early promise of genius. He travelled on to Scotland, where the wild historical romance of Holyrood and the heavy, heaving sea of the low, grey Hebrides inspired the romantic "Scotch" Symphony and the wonderful tone-picture, the

"Hebrides" overture ("Fingal's Cave"). These two works show us a man with the poetic fire where he is elsewhere generally nothing more than a respectable, amiable, fluent and superficially brilliant composer. His compound name is Jewish-Christian. It is considered bad taste in Germany to refer to him only by his first name even in the merest catalogue, for his family legally added the christian surname of Bartholdy.

The composer seems to have definitely found inspiration for his "Scotch" Symphony at Holyrood in the summer of 1829. Describing the scene, he wrote: "Everything around is broken and mouldering, and the bright sky shines in. I believe I found to-day in that old chapel the beginning of my 'Scotch' Symphony." He commenced the work in Rome in 1830, but did not complete it until January, 1842. The first performance was at Leipzig on March 3 following. On June 13 the composer conducted the new symphony in London at a concert of the Philharmonic Society. He was on his seventh visit to England. The orchestra employed is of "classical" proportions, but with four horns.

The symphony has four movements, but the composer directs that there shall be no break between them :

1. Andante con moto. Allegro un poco agitato.
2. Vivace non troppo.
3. Adagio.
4. Allegro vivacissimo. Allegro maestoso assai.

Kretzschmar, having in mind the composer's remarks I have quoted about the source of the symphony's inspiration (Holyrood), connects much of its meaning with the tragic history of Mary, Queen of Scots.

1. The introduction opens with a romantic melody, stated by wood-wind, horns and violas, in which an atmosphere of melancholy suggests the dim past of Northern history. The violins follow with a strain that provides a graceful contrast, but the opening theme is the dominating influence. The *allegro* opens softly in violins, violas and clarinets, and the subject seems to be a quick parody of the romantic melody of the introduction. Kretzschmar considers it a possible indication of the light mind of Mary, Queen of Scots, in face of the brooding storm that was to break over her destiny, the tragedy of which he sees in the last movement. A brilliant *ff* (*assai animato*) for full orchestra soon follows. At its climax the clarinet introduces the quiet second subject. The agitated accents are not so easily quieted, however, and it is not until a graceful,

fluent melody, typical of the composer, appears. The development, while carrying on the underlying romance and poetry of the movement, is somewhat too fluent and lacks inspiration. The composer was evidently unable to sustain the high promise of the opening pages, and what with a greater mind might have been a movement charged with tragic significance, here becomes mainly the smooth effort of a facile pen, which is, nevertheless, technically weak in development. The faltering inspiration happily redeems itself near the end of the movement, when the *assai animato* passage is thundered out by the full orchestra and significantly followed by the romantic melody of the introduction. The human appeal of the drama that Kretzschmar sees is thus restored at this point.

2. This *scherzo*-like movement suggests to me that which MacDowell would have termed an "aside" from the dramatic content of the whole, and its presence a merely respectable compliance with the usual form and length of a symphony. Moreover, it is extremely superficial music. A Scottish flavour is introduced by its rhythm of a "Scotch snap," but the rustic theme announced by the clarinet is, for all its obvious attempt at gaiety, exceedingly dull. The whole movement is below the level of the rest of the



Mendelssohn

symphony and shows its composer in his most annoying aspect of mere cleverness and superficial fluency.

3. In the *adagio* we come to bigger music again. It is one of the best slow movements Mendelssohn ever composed; superior even to that of his violin concerto, for it has an underlying passion in addition to lovely melody. A short prologue recalls the romantic melancholy of the opening of the symphony. The theme that follows is a lovely melodic inspiration stated by the violins. The second subject, presented by woodwind and horns, is like a summons and charged with foreboding tragedy. It is repeated *ff* by the full orchestra, and later assumes much significance by reason of its threatening accents. The lovely first subject is heard in horns and 'cellos, and is interrupted later by the second. Violins and 'cellos give the former a further repetition, but the latter is significantly suggested in the concluding bars by the drum. Two sharp, loud notes suddenly take us into the final movement. The tragedy has begun.

4. Kretzschmar regards this movement as being closely connected with the tragic fate of Mary Stuart, already foreshadowed by the foreboding second subject of the *adagio*. The first theme is wild and impetuous, and announced, in

thirds and sixths, by the violins, accompanied by chords from violas, horns and bassoons. The subject has a second strain stated by violins in *staccato* tones; this is less agile than the first part. A strong, warlike motive soon appears. This is regarded by Kretzschmar as representing the gathering of the clans for battle. He points out that its introductory bars foreshadow the second subject proper, the melancholy tones of which enter soon afterwards in E minor. There is a haunting sadness about this theme, the appearances of which cast a melancholy romance over the turbulent mood of the movement. A powerful triplet figure for horns and lower strings will be noticed. The listener should have no difficulty in following the further progress of the movement, although its interest is not sustained in the development section, where the composer's habit of meaningless fluency is all too obvious.

The epilogue, *allegro maestoso assai*, enters in A major. I fail to appreciate this tacking and think that the movement would have been more suitably concluded by the dying accents of tragedy heard just before the epilogue enters. This latter is too obviously an attempt to canonise the subject of the tragedy, and is not made in the composer's most convincing style.

MOZART'S SYMPHONY NO. 41, IN C
(" JUPITER ").

SYMPHONY No. 41, in C ("Jupiter"),

MOZART (1756-1791).

MOZART is, in some respects, still the most sublime, if not the most exciting, of all composers. His best music, pure as a crystal stream, perfect in form, exquisite in harmonic and instrumental colouring, everywhere indicates both a genius and master. He was mortal, however, and not all his music is of equal worth. The "Jupiter" symphony, said to have been so entitled by J. B. Cramer (1771-1858), is the last of his symphonies and one of three that form a remarkable instance of prolific genius. Within the space of about six weeks in the summer of 1788, Mozart gave his last and greatest symphonies to the world. No. 39, in E flat, appeared on June 26, No. 40, in G minor, on July 25, and No. 41, in C ("Jupiter"), on August 10. It would seem as if the creative fire blazed to its utmost in one final effort to accomplish its mis-

sion before the early death of the body. Each of the three symphonies shows a different emotional picture while preserving the indelible stamp of their creator. The E flat is joyous, the G minor clouded and anxious, and the C major dignified and even grand. Ambros says of them, "Considered as pure music, it is hardly worth while to ask whether the world possesses anything more perfect." Perhaps not in instrumental music, but in the art as a whole we have to reckon with the perfect vocal creations of the English late-Tudor and Elizabethan composers.

Mozart's power to make the orchestra sing was well defined by Wagner, who said that the former gave to melody "by way of compensation for its delivery by mere instruments, the depth of feeling and ardour which lies at the source of the human voice as the expression of the unfathomable depths of the heart." The flame of Mozart's genius burnt so strongly in his last symphonies that it had the effect of spurring on Haydn, no longer young, to greater efforts.

The "Jupiter" is generally considered to be the grandest of Mozart's symphonies. Its effortless eloquence, dignity and power, perfect balance of construction, polished charm and grace, and, above all, haunting beauty of expression, have caused almost every later composer, including

Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Tchaïkovsky, Wagner, Elgar and Strauss, to pay homage to "immortal Mozart." Its final movement is an astounding example of consummate technical mastery combined with the inspiration of an almost incomparable musical genius.

The "Jupiter" symphony is scored for the orchestra of the period of its composition, consisting of two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, drums and strings. It will be noted that, unlike Haydn's "London" symphony, it contains no parts for clarinets. Mozart was quite familiar with their use, however, and uses them with charming effect in the first (No. 39, in E flat) of his last three symphonies. His use of the wood-wind shows a much more independent treatment than that found in the "London" symphony of Haydn which is discussed in this book. The fact is no guide, however, for in some of his other later symphonies, the "Oxford" and "Military," for instance, Haydn's use of the wood-wind justified a contemporary accusation of his being an apostle of the "new music."

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1. Allegro vivace.
 2. Andante cantabile.
 3. *Menuetto and Trio.* Allegretto.
 4. *Finale* Allegro molto

1. The movement opens at once with the two principal themes comprising the first subject. The first, perhaps a significant call to attention to the last symphony of "immortal Mozart," is stated in bold and arresting accents by the full orchestra. The second immediately follows in a pleading phrase from the strings. The sublime purity which characterises the symphony throughout becomes apparent in these first few bars. At the ninth bar the full orchestra bursts in with a triumphant continuation. Flutes and oboes are later heard in an important accompanying figure. After the development comes the delightful second subject, announced by the first violins. This is followed by an episode in which a charming, gay melody, stated by violins, claims the attention; it has an animated second part. The score directs that the whole of the foregoing shall be repeated.* The development starts with the episodic melody now transposed into E flat. The first theme later appears in F, with the important accompaniment, originally played by flutes and oboes, now transferred to bassoons. The rest of the movement can easily be followed to its conclusion.

* This is done in Albert Coates's gramophone performance, and occupies the whole of the first side of the first disc.



Mozart

Mozart

2. Although this movement has a certain dignity and what has been described as a "large grand air," there is little in its touchingly human accents that is Jupiter-like. Trumpets and drums are silent throughout. Muted violins give out a serene melody, punctuated at intervals by a loud chord from the full orchestra. After some elaboration, a new theme appears in oboes and bassoons against a syncopated accompaniment for strings. The second subject is a stately theme announced by oboes, bassoons and violins. Note the charming treatment of the instruments in the ensuing exposition. All through this movement Mozart displays a wealth of beautiful melodic and instrumental detail that exceeds even his own preceding works. The absolute purity of the music places its composer on a pinnacle almost by himself. As in the first movement, a repeat is directed.* The movement proceeds on its journey, sometimes broken by moments of agitation, but prevailing in its mood of haunting beauty. The conclusion comes in sublimely peaceful accents.

3. The principal theme, given to the first violins, has an appropriate rhythmic grace. It

* The gramophone recording of a performance conducted by Albert Coates makes this, running on to the second side of the slow movement disc.

assumes a more energetic appearance on being taken up by the full orchestra. A passage for wood-wind alone is noticeable. The general gracefulness is not free from clouded thought.

The *trio* portion commences where flute, bassoons and horn have a cadence like an "Amen," answered by a running passage for first violins. After a repeat, the *menuetto* returns.

The graceful expressiveness, slightly tinged with sadness, of this movement is a distinct spiritual contrast to the corresponding one of the Haydn symphony we have discussed. The two may serve to show the different mentalities of the classics who established the form of that great vehicle of musical expression, the sonata or symphony.

4. The concluding movement is truly Jupiter-like. It contains four important ideas. The principal theme commences at once and consists of a phrase of four semibreves (whole bar notes in this case), played by the first violins, accompanied by the seconds. A bright connecting passage leads to its repetition by all the violins, the rest of the orchestra accompanying. A second theme appears, planing down to its octave. A moment's silence, and the second violins start the first subject as a fugue. A third theme, recognisable by a characteristic trill, appears, which is

played by the first violins and answered by the basses. A moment's silence, and a fourth theme, really the second subject of the movement, is announced. It has three long notes followed by a descending run. The exposition of all the foregoing is directed to be repeated.* Following this, the music develops with a contrapuntal skill that is remarkable, not merely for its intricacy, but for its clarity and the consummate ease with which every technical difficulty is mastered. Before the *coda*, a repeat of the development is directed, but the gramophone recording previously referred to does not give this perhaps unnecessary prolonging of the movement. The *coda* itself starts with an inversion of the opening theme. This is followed by a fugue, in which all the themes are woven with surpassing skill that unmistakably indicates the hand of both a genius and craftsman of the highest order. The symphony concludes in a triumphant strain. We leave this work knowing it to be one of the earliest examples, yet feeling it also as one of the greatest monuments, of its form.

The complete gramophone recording, published by "His Master's Voice," of a performance by the

* This is done in the gramophone record of Albert Coates's interpretation, thus forming the first of the three sides giving the present movement.

Symphony Orchestra, under Albert Coates, gives an almost adequate study of the symphony. Mr. Coates's interpretation of the first movement is noticeable for fiery vigour rather than smooth polish. The second and third movements are beautifully played, while the *finale* shows the conductor's superbly magnetic control of the orchestra.

SCHUBERT'S SYMPHONY IN B MINOR
("UNFINISHED").

SYMPHONY in B Minor ("Unfinished").

SCHUBERT (1797-1828).

THIS is one of the best known symphonies in the world, played by all sorts of musical organisations, from the first-rate symphony orchestra to brass, military, restaurant and kinema bands. The second subject of its first movement is probably the symphony tune best known among the multitude. The shy and awkward manners of Schubert prevented him from ever becoming much known in his lifetime outside the student circle in which he lived a Bohemian life. He was a most prolific composer, and the output of his short career was a powerful factor in bringing German music to the full consciousness of its mission; but he was too unconscious an artist to have ever realised this. He made few preliminary sketches and hated revision, and was in this respect the opposite of his beloved Beethoven. His technical abilities were not great and

his construction was ill-disciplined. It is in his songs that we find Schubert the great composer. The best of these entirely spontaneous creations proved a mighty stimulant to the building up of German *lieder* (art-songs). The "discovery" of Schubert was largely due to the researches of Schumann before 1840 and the cordial interest of Mendelssohn soon afterwards; the English writer, Sir George Grove, also played an active part in the matter. The detailed knowledge of Schubert's works was so long delayed that their historic significance was obscured and, even to-day, may be underrated. His orchestration shows a natural instinct, and he seemed to have a close understanding of the then limited brass instruments, especially displaying a great predilection for the trombones. That he understood the latter better than Beethoven is shown by his orchestral use of them in soft chords and not solely for big effects.

"Why unfinished?" asks M. Bourgault-Ducoudray, dealing with the symphony in his book on Schubert. He then goes on: "Did not Schubert realise how he would be ministering to his own glory in completing a work so highly coloured and so individual?" The answer is that Schubert was probably too unconscious an artist to do so. An English writer of programme notes



Schubert

suggested that the composer felt he could not keep up the worth of the symphony in succeeding movements. This is perhaps best answered by Schubert's own method; it was quite like him to dash off two movements of a symphony and then bow to some other inspiration, probably his unsuccessful aspirations to opera. It should further be remembered that there was then little likelihood of a symphony of his being played in public; he had not the discipline of such presentation to urge him. I confess to finding the symphony quite long enough, for although it has many beautiful passages, the style of its structure is not of profound or sustaining interest like that of a symphony by Beethoven or Brahms. We have a complete Schubert symphony in the C major, and this is of inordinate length and so vague in build that even its charming material becomes tiresome. The enthusiastic Schumann, however, spoke of Schubert's "heavenly length."

The "Unfinished" symphony dates from 1822. The first two movements and nine bars of the *scherzo*, the latter never played, are available.

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1. Allegro moderato.
 2. Andante con moto.

1. A grave and foreboding opening in the

lower strings is answered by a poignant melody for oboe and clarinet, the violins having a counter subject. The symphony already has that wistful, pathetic charm which is its most compelling feature. The themes are developed until a succession of loud chords interrupts. The serene second subject which follows is one of the most widely known of Schubert's airs. It is announced by 'cellos with a syncopated accompaniment in violas and clarinets. A portion of it is used in imitation. The development starts with the grave opening phrase in the basses, which is treated in imitation. Although some charming effects are heard, Schubert's inability to develop his ideas and put them into anything approaching a fine structure is all too apparent. He seems forced to depend on the great melodic interest of his themes, which are, however, liable to become tiresome without any of the interesting development one expects to find in a symphony; but the charm and simple sincerity of the composer, and also his instinct for the dramatic,* raise him high above his technical limitations. The instant calmings of the strenuous passages by the serene second subject are like spiritual magic. The *coda* is based on the grave opening phrase.

* Witness the sudden loud chords.

2. The first subject is one of the composer's most serenely beautiful inspirations. The second is very moving, both in its manner of introduction and poignant, unaffected beauty. The whole effect is freighted with meaning that may be an unconscious reflection of the composer's unhappy circumstances; here we meet the Schubert whose genius stands alone. A subsidiary theme appears in the full orchestra. Later on the second subject is used in imitation between basses and first violins, the syncopated accompaniment being present in the "inner" parts. The recapitulation is noticeable for its varied instrumental scoring and the exalted beauty of what M. Bourgault-Ducoudray described as "these truly celestial harmonies." With equal truth he refers to the "supreme purity" of this music. Nevertheless, the movement seems to hover on the "heavenly length" in the way it wanders on with no very interesting development of its lovely materials.

The symphony has been played in complete form for the gramophone by the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Eugène Goossens, on "His Master's Voice" records. Mr. Goossens misses none of the exquisite beauties of the classic work, and the playing has fine precision and is very clear.

A distinguished rendering is secured by the

orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, under Eduard Moerike, on "Parlophone" records. Herr Moerike is well-known in Germany and America as a conductor of German opera. The British Symphony Orchestra gives a sound and thoughtful reading under Dr. Adrian C. Boult, on Edison-Bell "Velvet Face" records. Dr. Boult is known for his work in training orchestral conductors at the Royal College of Music, London. The New Queen's Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood, play a much loved interpretation on "Columbia" records.

STANFORD'S SYMPHONY NO. 3, IN
F MINOR, "THE IRISH" (OP. 28).

**SYMPHONY No. 3, in F Minor ("The Irish"),
(Op. 28).**

STANFORD (1852-1924).

SIR CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD was a distinguished musician of his day, and on his death in 1924 was buried in Westminster Abbey; yet his compositions have been somewhat unduly neglected. He was overshadowed partly by the prolific character of his own compositions, partly by his great work as a teacher, and chiefly by his great contemporary, Elgar. Nevertheless, some of his music has won lasting esteem, the choral works, "The Revenge" and "Songs of the Fleet," being particularly well known.

Stanford was born in Dublin, and many of his finest works have an Irish idiom. His Irish songs have lately been acclaimed as the most valuable contribution to the realm of the art-song since Schubert. I hope, indeed, that there is still time

for the fuller recognition of the poetic genius of Stanford. He has no sensations of modern "progress" in music to show us, but he can reveal some very lovable characteristics that are entirely his own. Any reader who wishes to read more about Stanford and his music may refer to my own "Sir Charles Stanford."*

Stanford composed seven symphonies, of which the third, "The Irish," has been the most popular, although in recent years it has been infrequently played in London. The "Irish" symphony was first played on May 27, 1887, at a concert in London conducted by Dr. Hans Richter. Stanford, who was a Cambridge scholar, an M.A., gave the work a Latin inscription, which in English is :

*Be thou gracious to my country, and to me who sing,
of my country, Phœbus, who thyself singest with the
crowned lyre.*

The music abounds with poetic beauty that is always lovable, and often moving and stirring; its instrumentation is fresh and charming. The Irish idiom is one which the composer loved deeply, understood intimately, and which was part of his nature and racial fibre. The late Joseph

* Published by Kegan Paul and Co.



C. V. Stanford

Bennett, a well-known musical journalist, suggested the following lines as a true motto for the symphony :

*Erin, the tear and the smile in thine eyes
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in the skies;
Shining through sorrow's stream,
Sadd'ning through pleasure's beam,
Thy suns, with doubtful gleam
Weep while they rise.*

The construction of the work is straightforward, and the most brief outline of the movements, which are the usual four in number, will suffice.

-
1. Allegro moderato.
 2. Allegro molto vivace.
 3. Andante con moto.
 4. *Finale*. Allegro moderato ma con fuoco.

1. The symphony commences in F minor with a soft romantic theme in the strings. This is presently discussed at some length. The entry of the second subject will be recognised by its dignified flowing melody, the key changing to A flat major. This change from minor to the relative major key is conventional, and easily, because naturally, felt by the listener. Stanford was never a musical reformer! The two themes are developed in ingenious and masterly style. An ultimate *coda* brings this melodious movement to its conclusion.

2. This is a jolly *scherzo*, the chief subject of which is in the form of the Hop Jig, an Irish national dance. The second subject, presently heard from the flutes, has a more austere character. The *trio* portion has a long, lovely melody played by the clarinets. The rollicking dance mood returns and takes the movement to its conclusion.

3. The *andante* is notable for the poignancy and depth of its expressiveness. A curiously impressive harp solo opens the movement; then follows the first subject, a theme of mournful beauty announced by unaccompanied clarinets. This is fully treated and occupies our attention for some time. The second subject is a plaintive tune given out by the oboes, with which the violas suggest the old Irish melody, "The Lament of the Sons of Usnach." The music becomes increasingly poignant until it ends in a most moving mood of quiet sadness.

4. The stirring *finale* provides a striking contrast to the foregoing *andante*, thus furnishing the probable explanation as to why Stanford placed his *scherzo* as the second instead of the usual third movement. After some introductory matter, oboe and clarinet, accompanied by strings *pizzicato* (plucked), give out the old Irish tune, "Molly McAlpin." This is presently succeeded by a

second subject, which in turn gives place to another old Irish air, "Let Erin Remember the Days of Old," stirringly announced by the four horns. The movement, which is in the form of a *rendo*, grows increasingly triumphant. One does not have to be Irish in order to feel the thrill of this intensely nationalist music. The symphony ends in a mood of triumphant splendour.

TCHAIKOVSKY'S SYMPHONY NO. 5,
IN E MINOR (OP. 64).

SYMPHONY No. 5, in E Minor (Op. 64).

TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893).

MANY critics have considered this symphony to be equal, if not superior, to the more popular sixth and last ("Pathétique" symphony), which followed six years later. It is certainly less generally pessimistic. During its composition, Tchaïkovsky wrote to a friend: "I am fearfully anxious to prove, not only to others, but to myself, that I am not worked out as a composer." The production in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) in 1888 met with hardly any enthusiasm from either musicians or press. Disappointed, Tchaïkovsky laid the symphony aside, and it was not until some years after his death that its worth was recognised. In comparison with his fourth and sixth symphonies the composer thought little of it; yet its *andante cantabile* is now considered to be the finest symphony movement he ever composed.

Although the composer seems to have made no special reference to any underlying meaning in this work, nor of any emotional or poetic idea which may have inspired it, the symphony may well suggest, although not intentionally express, the subject of Fate and the artist's struggle with it. This suggestion may be borne out by the "Motto" theme which, appearing in various parts of the work and ultimately transformed into triumphant accents, gives a continuity to the whole. Edwin Evans, Senr., in his full analysis of this symphony in a supplementary chapter to Rosa Newmarch's "*Life and Works of Tchaïkovsky*,"* regards the treatment of the "Motto" theme as more admirable as workmanship than inspiration, and dismisses any idea of a hidden meaning. He is naturally more concerned with analysing the technical realities of the work than the less rigid task of interpreting its emotional aspects. If the listener is helped to better appreciate the symphony by attaching an emotional significance to its "Motto" theme, he is quite justified in doing so. A similar interpretation is openly given to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The styles of Beethoven and Tchaïkovsky are vastly different, but it may be said that the Fifth Symphonies of both

* Published by William Reeves Ltd.



Tchaïkovsky

are to be numbered among the world's orchestral masterpieces.

The Russian critic, Berezovsky, regarded Tchaïkovsky's Fifth Symphony in a very critical light, but his account is extremely interesting. Writing of the work as a whole, he said : " The Fifth is the weakest of all Tchaïkovsky's symphonies ; nevertheless it is a striking work and takes a prominent place not only among its composer's compositions, but among Russian musical works in general. . . . The entire symphony seems to set forth some dark spiritual experience, some heavy condition of a mind torn by importunate memories which have poisoned existence. Only at the close the clouds lift, the sky clears, and we see the blue stretching pure and clear beyond." Later criticisms have unanimously endorsed his favourable comments, but have dispelled his reckoning of the work in relation to Tchaïkovsky's other symphonies. It is now almost as well-known as the "Pathétique," while the first three are seldom heard, and the fourth, although a fine work, only slightly more. Kashkin, in his "Reminiscences of Peter Ilich Tchaïkovsky," tells an amusing story of Tchaïkovsky dining with Brahms after the latter had heard the former's Fifth Symphony for the first time in Hamburg. Brahms told Tchaïkovsky why he did not like the work. He spoke

so simply and sincerely that Tchaïkovsky gave an equally friendly criticism of the German master's music. They parted excellent and understanding friends.

Tchaïkovsky was a convinced opponent of the Russian nationalist composers, Glinka, Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff, but he could not entirely rid himself of race fibre, and there is much that is truly, although not intentionally Russian in this Fifth Symphony. It is brilliantly scored, for the composer was a great master of the orchestra. The dedication is to M. Ave-Lallement, of Hamburg.

-
1. Andante. Allegro con anima.
 2. Andante cantabile.
 3. *Valse*—Allegro moderato.
 4. *Finale*—Andante maestoso. Allegro vivace (alla breve).

1. Note well the sombre, fateful theme given out by the clarinet. This is the "Motto" theme that, with slight modifications, threads the work into a unified whole. It eventually makes way for the principal melody of this movement, a dance-like tune announced by clarinet and bassoon.*

* The "Columbia" gramophone record (Part 1) begins here.

This theme should also be kept in mind, for it gains a significance by being recalled amid the general triumph at the end of the symphony. It is now worked up with brilliance and energy. The second section follows with a group of three themes.* First comes a phrase on the violins like a deep sigh, rounded off by sad little comments from the horn; then follows a dialogue between strings and wood-wind; and finally comes a lovely, but sad melody sung by the violins. Proceeding, the thrills of Tchaïkovsky's orchestra are felt, and it will be understood why the nervous excitement of this symphony makes it such a general favourite. Charming opportunities for individual instruments and stirring effects for the full orchestra take up the listener's attention, although he will notice the prominence of the dance-tune. This latter ends the movement by dying away in the depths of the bass. The gloomy close† affords a significant reminder of the sombre mood in which the movement opened, which is perhaps forgotten by the listener in the contrasting tunes and somewhat hectic excitement which followed.

* Occurring early in Part 2 of Allegro on the "His Master's Voice" records.

† Omitted on "Columbia" record.

2. The *andante* movement is surely one of the most haunting that Tchaïkovsky ever composed. It opens with dark, fateful chords; but these are forgotten in the sadly beautiful horn solo* that follows. This is succeeded by an expressive one for oboe. The two instruments have a little dialogue in which the listener will note their tonal contrast. After a time,† clarinet, answered by bassoon, announces a third expressive theme, the mood of which seems one of wistful resignation. The music becomes more intense, and presently the fateful "Motto" theme breaks the wistful mood.‡ The violins play the first tune, which restores the sad serenity. The second works to an intensity that seems like anguish of the soul. It sinks to peace, but the "Motto" theme bursts in with almost savage force.‡ After this the music has a most poignant expressiveness, concluding peacefully, but sadly.

3. In place of the usual *scherzo* movement we here have one described as a waltz, of which Edwin Evans, Senr., says in his book to which I have already referred: "It is perhaps right that

* The "Columbia" record (Part 2) begins here.

Occurring early in Part 2 of *Andante* on "His Master's Voice" records.

† Omitted on "Columbia" record.

(whether by courtesy or the adoption of an accommodating scale of judgment) we should not absolutely refuse to admit the title; but the fact remains that this is simply an ordinary graceful movement in $\frac{3}{4}$; from which the more characteristic accentuation allied with other dance forms is absent, and which falls under the 'valse' category merely by virtue of that fact." The movement bears the charm that Tchaïkovsky infused into his ballet music, including the well-known "Nutcracker" ("Casse-Noisette"). It presents no problems and may easily be followed; but the "Motto" theme makes a baleful appearance in the *coda*.

4. The *finale* opens with a stately version of the "Motto" theme in the brighter major key. This imposing introduction eventually gives place to a vivacious tune in the style of a Russian folk-song.* A cheerful oboe phrase and a flowing melody in the violins follow. The "Motto" theme, majestic and no longer foreboding, appears in the splendour of brass chords.† A quieter and wistful mood comes to the music for a time† but

* The "Columbia" record (Part 4) begins here.

Occurring in Part 2 of Finale on "His Master's Voice" records.

a sudden loud chord soon brings back the more exciting atmosphere, the vivacity of which was considered by Brahms to be too lacking in restraint. It is indeed antagonistic to the German master's serious thought and grey-tinted instrumentation. The "Motto" theme, still in its majestic garb, is heard once more, and the music grows still more glowing in a mighty climax which presents Tchaïkovsky in what is perhaps his most thrilling mood.* A short *presto*† brings redoubled animation, and at the end the dance-like tune in the first movement is recalled in the brighter major key, giving the symphony a wonderful sense of triumphant fulfilment.

A magnificent gramophone recording of this symphony in complete form, conducted by Albert Coates, is available ("His Master's Voice"). These records, some of the best orchestral ever issued, give a more vivid idea of the work than is possible at most symphony concerts, for Albert Coates, with his extremely magnetic personality, is one of the greatest exponents of Russian orchestral music; a fact which is partly due to his association with the old Imperial Opera in

* Occurring in Part 3 of Finale on "His Master's Voice" records.

† Omitted on "Columbia" record.

Tchaïkovsky's Symphony No. 5, Op. 64. 149

Russia. An abbreviated version by fifty performers of the famous Milan Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Romani, is available on "Columbia" records. The symphony has been transcribed for pianoforte solo, with indications of the orchestral scoring, by Edwin Evans, Senr.*

* Published by William Reeves Bookseller Limited.

TCHAIKOVSKY'S SYMPHONY NO. 6,
B MINOR, "PATHETIQUE" (OP. 74).

SYMPHONY No. 6, in B Minor, "Pathétique"
(Op. 74).

TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

THIS is one of the best known symphonies in the world. It is highly probable that its success owes much to its title, which has furnished, or seemed to furnish, a key to that "inner meaning" which almost every listener seeks to discover in a large musical work of conflicting emotions. This symphony has been invested with an autobiographical interest for which, however, there is no real warranty. Its tortured phrases have been supposed to foreshadow the composer's own end, which was at first falsely rumoured to have been by suicide. This theory has been exploded in the "Reminiscences of Peter Ilich Tchaïkovsky," by N. Kashkin, one of the professors of the Moscow Conservatoire and a friend and colleague of the composer. He shows that the work was not composed under the influence of

morbid thoughts of death, and had Tchaïkovsky carried out his idea of writing the programme of the symphony there would have been no fantastic theories spread round it by sensationalists. It may possibly be a pity to spoil a creepy story, but, on the other hand, it is as well that the work should not be misunderstood in the narrow light of a mere personal apprehension of death on the part of the composer, even though we have his own testimony that the unrevealed programme was "penetrated by subjective sentiment."

The symphony conveys its own message to every individual hearer, but bears a common burden of anguish, calamity and final sense of dismay in the realisation of the tragedy and finality of our striving human hopes. Tchaïkovsky's experiences which inspired this symphony are identical with our own. These thoughts and problems lie deep down in every thinking mortal, even if they do not in every case disturb the surface of life. In providing self-revelation Tchaïkovsky gave, therefore, utterances that have wide human application, and here is probably the deeper reason for the widespread appeal of this symphony. The only personal morbidness in the work is, in Tchaïkovsky's own words, "that desperate, cruel, tyrannical, moral ailment against which I have contended all my life—nervousness."

The French word, "pathétique," has not quite the same meaning as the English word "pathetic," but is derived from the Greek indication of something emotional. Tchaïkovsky did not speak English, but, like most educated Russians, was conversant with French.

Tchaïkovsky seldom travelled far in his music before he struck the note of melancholy, of which he seemed to know every variation. His pessimism and moods of blackest despair seem only to engage the affections of the public, who are apt to view his music as typically Russian; but their estimation is hardly correct. Tchaïkovsky's despair is in the form of a frequent romantic and emotional mood, whereas the melancholy with which we associate the Russian character is a sober, grey pessimism, and more part of nature than of mood. It should be remembered that Tchaïkovsky was antagonistic to the definitely Russian national school of composers founded by Glinka and magnificently expounded by Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff. His personal character was Slavic, but his musical outlook was cosmopolitan, and he most revered the teachers who leaned towards tradition and authority. He thus succeeded in becoming the best known Russian composer outside his own country; but to know only Tchaïkovsky is to

know little of Russian music. A full-flavoured Russian symphony by Borodin will be found described in the present book. The cosmopolitan musical convictions of Tchaïkovsky happily could not destroy the essential fibre of national character, and in many places in his music it is a Russian voice that is heard, even if it does not speak with a truly Russian accent.

Regarding the idea of the symphony, the composer wrote to his favourite nephew, Vladimir Davidov (to whom the work was dedicated), in February, 1893: ". . . . Just as I was starting on my journey (to Paris in 1892) the idea came to me for a new symphony. This time with a programme, but of the kind which remains an enigma to all—let them guess it who can. The work will be entitled 'A Programme Symphony' (No. 6). This programme is penetrated by subjective sentiment. During my journey, while composing it in my mind, I frequently shed tears. . . . You cannot imagine how much joy I feel at the conviction that my day is not yet finished." It will be remembered that Tchaïkovsky wrote his Fifth Symphony six years previously to prove to himself, as well as to others, that he was not worked out as a composer. He was unusually confident of the value of his Sixth Symphony, stoutly declaring it to be the best thing he had

composed or was ever likely to compose. "Without exaggeration, I have put my whole soul into this symphony," he wrote to the Grand Duke Constantine on October 3, 1893.

The first performance was conducted by the composer on October 28, 1893, at a concert of the Russian Musical Society in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad). The symphony made no deep impression on this occasion, but, under other conductors, it later grew quickly into favour. Tchaïkovsky adopted his brother's suggestion and called it "Pathétique" instead of "Programme Symphony." He despatched the score to the publisher Jurgenson in Moscow, but followed this with a countermand regarding the inadequate subtitle. This letter, dated October 30, 1893, arrived too late. On November 2, Tchaïkovsky fell ill with cholera, and on the morning of November 6 he collapsed and died in the presence of two of his brothers, three nephews, three medical men, and his faithful servant, Alexis Safronov; sufficient witnesses, indeed, to disprove the sensational rumours of suicide.

The symphony strays far from the accepted form, the opening movement having various changes of time which give early indication of the erratic character of the work. Symphonic analysis is, therefore, not at the moment suited

or particularly helpful to the reader of the present book. Edwin Evans, Senr., in his supplementary part of Mrs. Rosa Newmarch's book on Tchaïkovsky,* says: "Noble as the creation may be (and of its title to be so considered there is no question), its claim to the name of Symphony is one based rather upon the respect due to its composer, who so entitled it, than upon any discoverable conformity either with symphonic form proper or with the conventions which have gradually accumulated round it." For the reader who desires an exhaustive analysis of this symphony, I cannot do better than refer him to the book mentioned. The same author (Edwin Evans, Senr.) has also transcribed the symphony for pianoforte solo, with indications of the orchestral instruments.*

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1. Adagio. Allegro. Andante, etc.
 2. Allegro con grazia.
 3. Allegro molto vivace.
 4. Adagio lamentoso.

1. The first movement is notable for sharp emotional contrasts. The gloomy introduction

* Published by William Reeves Bookseller Limited.

speaks of the disillusionment of life. The *allegro* is feverish and restless, the beautiful second theme providing consolation, yet saddened by vanished hope. The solemn *coda* brings a sense of desolation. Some of the passages in this movement may even seem brutal, but they are true to human existence.

2. This movement is in the comparatively uncommon $\frac{5}{4}$ time. It may be considered a pathetic attempt to turn from the disenchantment of life. The *trio* is somewhat sadder, but not heavy or depressing. There is a Russian flavour in the lonely twilight of the quiet, but vast spaces that this movement seems to fit.

3. The martial spirit of this movement is well known. Its purpose, gathering in intensity, is stern and steady, even though the cause be a lost one.

4. The steadfast spirit of the preceding movement has not led to triumph. Here is perhaps the truer story of mortal experience. Few composers have been able to write such passages of utter despair as we find in this closing movement. Perhaps it is as well that Beethoven, whose life was much more tragic than Tchaïkovsky's, was able to show us a sublimity of suffering and will to triumph. The revelation of Beethoven in his Fifth Symphony is inspiring in its ultimate vic-

tory over Fate, and gives new heart to perplexed humanity; but the composer was a man of more than ordinary strength of will. Tchaïkovsky had far less of the unconquerable in his make-up, and his outbursts are rather of the emotion than the will. His expression of Fate as the conqueror rather than the conquered is perhaps the truer interpretation for the majority of humanity. The picture is not pleasant to look upon, and the healthy-minded listener is glad to escape from its moral; yet the "Pathétique" symphony is so vivid in emotion and so powerful in technical construction that it attracts a large number of music-lovers. A morbid picture to some, a revealing mirror to others, and a study for the student of harmony and instrumentation, its popularity is self-explained. The orchestral writing is richly coloured.

Tchaïkovsky's instrumentation seems particularly suited for gramophone recording. His Fifth Symphony, previously discussed, provided one of the most successful orchestral recordings. The "Pathétique" was recorded in the same series ("His Master's Voice"); the conductor on this occasion again being Mr. Albert Coates, directing the Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Coates, as we expect, works up the tremendous emotional power of the music. He can

always get the last ounce out of Tchaïkovsky, and the vitality of his Russian racial fibre, together with his masterly control of sweeping waves of orchestral tone, make these records a very wonderful insight into the composer's varying moods.

The orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, is directed by Dr. Weissmann in a thrilling, authoritative and well-controlled rendering on "Parlophone" records. The New Queen's Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood, give a picturesque performance of an abridged version on "Columbia" records. Sir Henry's reading realises much of the innate fatalism, besides the emotional excitement of the symphony. The late Beecham Symphony Orchestra played abridged versions of the second and third movements on a further "Columbia" record. Their distinguished conductor, Sir Thomas Beecham, first introduced to London the Russian operas of Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff.

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